

765 of the dead person. This statement receives additional support
 783 from the fact that no ritual mourning is observed for an infant: only the parents of the dead infant take a bath and change their robes after the corpse has been buried. An elder, unlike an infant, is socially important and has a voice in the affairs of his *okka* and village. Ritual mourning is quite different from grief at the death of the person in question. The parents of the infant might be steeped in sorrow, while the death of a decrepit and senile elder might actually mean very little grief. Still, in the former case no ritual mourning is observed, whereas in the latter case it might be prolonged to the sixteenth or twenty-eighth day.

[178] Elderly Coorgs say that mourning periods are becoming shorter, and this is not surprising as the kin-groups are becoming smaller and the old values are giving place to new ones. Formerly *māda* was usually performed, for an elder, on the twenty-eighth day and *not* on the sixteenth. *Mādam* in Tamil means 'month', and there are twenty-eight days in a lunar month.

As has already been mentioned, the performance of *māda* puts an end to ritual mourning for all excepting the surviving spouse and eldest son. These two have to observe ritual mourning until they have performed *dikshē uttuva* (untying of mourning), which is usually a few weeks, if not months, after *māda*. Between *māda* and *dikshē uttuva* the two most important mourners do not perform any rites, but merely observe some of the food taboos and wear mourning dress.

• [593] Speaking very broadly, the length of the mourning period is an index of the closeness of the bond prevailing between the dead person and the mourners. This holds good for birth-pollution too: while pollution ends for all relatives on the twelfth day, it ends for the mother on the sixtieth day. The mother-child bond is the closest of all kinship bonds, and this fact finds expression in the mother being subject to birth-pollution longer than everybody else.

VII

Senior relatives of the dead person do not play an active part in ritual mourning. This does not, however, mean that they are completely exempt from it, especially those who are members of the same house as the dead person. As members of the pollution house (*nikē manē*), they may not salute anyone, nor allow anyone to

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Formerly every Coorg akka had one or more Palaya or other low-caste families attached to it as slaves. This was again an hereditary relationship, and between families and not between individuals. ¹²⁵ 596 587

II

In Coorg the agnatically related males form a corporate body enjoying the bulk of the rights in the *okka*. Men, thanks to patri-locality, are assured of continuous residence in the *okka* to which they belong, whereas the women have to leave their natal *okka* on marriage and become members of their conjugal *okka*. The men have a sense of belonging to the *okka* which is absent in all but the oldest women. A girl has to leave her natal *okka* on marriage, and this break in residential continuity is an important factor having legal and other consequences. It takes a long time¹ for her to be accepted into her conjugal *okka*: only when her children are grown up does she have the assured sense of belonging to her conjugal *okka*. 596 613 591

Sons are the comfort and hope of parents. They are the pillars of the *okka*. They are the means by which the *okka* continues to exist, and the continuity of the *okka* is a matter of the most profound concern to the members. Daughters are destined to leave their natal *okkas* and the children that are born to them enrich and perpetuate a different *okka*. [842]

A woman is not a member of an *okka* in the sense a man is, and the legal rights she enjoys are always inferior to a man's. There are compensations, however. A man enjoys his legal rights in one *okka*, whereas a woman enjoys hers in two, her natal and conjugal *okkas*. A girl is maintained in her natal *okka* till her marriage, or throughout her life if she decides to be a spinster. She has the right to return to her natal *okka* if, for example, her husband is impotent, or suffers from an incurable illness, or if her mother-in-law does not treat her properly. She has a right to return to her natal *okka* if she is divorced, assuming of course that she had not been divorced for a serious offence such as adultery with an Untouchable. Should she be guilty of such an offence she is thrown out of caste irrevocably and this means that she loses her rights in both her natal and her conjugal *okkas*. [586] [688]

At marriage her relatives give her gifts of jewellery, clothes, and vessels. These remain her property, and in the event of her divorce she brings them back to her natal *okka*.

¹ Cross-cousin marriage makes it easier for the girl to be absorbed into her conjugal *okka*. [582]

593 9% A person's rights in his or her *okka* are represented by twelve pebbles, euphemistically called 'twelve pieces of gold' (*pannaran-dachchi pon*). At marriage a girl loses most of her rights in her natal *okka* and obtains them in her conjugal *okka* instead. The bride's family friend transfers eleven pebbles to the groom's family friend. Eleven pebbles are transferred and not twelve. One pebble is retained by the girl's natal *okka* and this is because the bride retains some rights in her natal *okka*. She never loses them entirely. She has always a home from home. Her natal home is called *tā mané* (mother's home?), and a woman always feels tenderly towards it.

[606] A woman has a right to be maintained out of the funds of her conjugal *okka*. She is expected to do her share of domestic work under the guidance of the mistress of the house (*manépanikārti*). Not infrequently the mistress of the house is also her mother-in-law.

[422] A woman is entitled to cultivate a patch of ground for ginger and turmeric, and to raise fowl and pigs, and the income from their sale is
[434] entirely *her* property which she may hold even against her husband or children. But she may work on this patch only after doing her share of domestic work for the day.¹

593 5% 587 The preference for leviratic unions helped in the assimilation of a woman with her conjugal family. The Coorg saw, 'I will not come down the steps I have climbed up', refers to the fact that once a girl entered her conjugal home she usually stayed there for good, marrying one of the brothers of the husband in the event of the death of the latter. A girl on marriage becomes a member of her husband's *okka* and widowhood by itself does not alter her legal status. She continues to be a member of her conjugal *okka*. In fact, if there are no heirs to her dead husband's *okka* she might be called upon to raise up seed for it by entering into '*okka pariḷe*' or '*makka pariḷe*' alliance. She is not permitted, however, to raise up seed for her natal *okka*. There was an instance of this in Nālknād many years ago and it resulted in bitter hostility between the widow's natal and conjugal *okkas*.

593 5% Rights in a joint family are referred to as *sammānda*, and *sam-mānda* may be conferred or withdrawn. At marriage the bride acquires rights in the groom's house, and this is referred to as the

¹ Similarly, in the non-paddy season, men could cultivate small patches of land for ginger and turmeric. But they could only attend to them after they had done their share of the day's work on the ancestral estate.

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'giving of *summanda*'. *Sammanda* refers to the legal aspect of marriage, whereas *mūrta* refers to the solidarity aspect of it. These two together make up marriage. *Mūrta* has already been discussed at considerable length, and *sammanda* will be considered now. 593 585

III

The rights of membership in the groom's *okka* are conferred on the bride at the ritual of *sammanda*. The term *sammanda* is used both to indicate the rights of membership in an *okka* as well as the ritual in which such rights are conferred or withdrawn. The Kodagi term is a corruption of the Sanskrit *sambandha* which means, 'connexion, relation; connexion by marriage, matrimonial alliance, relationship, friendship, intimacy; kinsman; friend; ally'.¹

Usually, when a person acquires rights of membership in one *okka*, he (or she) by implication loses rights in another *okka*, even though such loss of rights may not be either complete or irrevocable. At an ordinary marriage, for instance, the *sammanda* ritual only confers rights on the bride in the groom's *okka*, but this acquisition of rights in another *okka* implies that the bride loses most of her rights in her natal *okka*. When a wife is divorced, the *sammanda* ritual that is performed severs the divorcée from her conjugal *okka* and she automatically reverts to her natal *okka*. In the case of a widow who wants to marry someone who is not a member of her late husband's *okka*, *sammanda* is first of all performed severing her connexion with her late husband's *okka*. On such ritual severance, she reverts to her natal *okka*, and *sammanda* is again performed, conferring on her rights in her new husband's *okka*. Between the loss of rights in her late husband's *okka* and the acquisition of rights in her new husband's *okka*, she is a member of her natal *okka*. [586] [587]

The two most important parts of marriage ritual are *mūrta* (part of *mangala*) and *sammanda*. There are three *mūrtas* in an ordinary marriage, two of which give expression to the solidarity prevalent between the groom or bride and his or her kindred respectively. In the third *mūrta* the creation of the new bond between the bride and groom is recognized by the groom's kindred expressing their solidarity with the bride and the bride's kindred with the groom. 593 596 585

¹ Macdonnell, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 339.

593 The two groups of kindred are brought together by the acquisition
596 of two objects of common interest.
585

While the *mūrta* part of marriage refers to the creation of a new bond between two individuals and the kin-groups in which each of them is born, *sammānda* defines and clarifies the new structural situation which has come into existence. It brings home to the participants that a new legal situation has arisen, that an individual has been transferred from one *okka* to another. *Sammānda* ritual is performed whenever such a structural and legal alteration is brought about. (See 'Table of *Sammānda* Rights' on pp. 173-5.)

1. The *sammānda* ritual performed at *kanni mangala* ('marriage of a virgin'), which is, incidentally, the most frequent type of marriage performed, confers on the bride rights of membership in the groom's *okka*.

[587] 2. (a) When a widow wants to marry a brother of the late husband, no fresh *sammānda* need be performed as no new legal situation has come into existence. The girl is a member of the second husband's *okka* even before marriage and she continues to be one after marriage.

593 When a girl marries in the *kanni mangala* way she acquires rights
596 of membership in the *okka* of her husband. This is a simple enough
421 fact, but in recent years the acquisition of property by individuals
178 for themselves and not for their *okkas* has confused the issue. A few
educated Coorgs have tried to maintain that a girl, on marriage, acquires only a share in her husband's share of the ancestral property, and consequently, when a widow marries the husband's younger brother, a fresh *sammānda* has to be performed. This is absurd. The whole idea of individual ownership of immovable property is recent in Coorg, and even more important is the fact that *sammānda* is more than the acquisition of rights in property. It is the acquisition of membership in an *okka*, with all its consequences, social, economic, legal, and ritual.

593 (b) When a widow wants to marry someone who is not a member
596 of her late husband's *okka*, she is first of all made to sever her con-
587 nexion with it, and such severance restores her to her natal *okka*. She is then given *sammānda* in her second husband's house.

[768] (c) The children of the widow are (usually) members of their father's *okka* except in certain cases which will be mentioned presently.

593 3. When a woman is divorced she loses her membership in her
596
586

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conjugal *okka* and reverts to her natal *okka*. Such reversion is automatic and not conditional upon the unanimous consent of the members of her natal *okka*. But if a woman has been divorced for a grave offence, her natal *okka* might decide to have nothing to do with her.

4. Children of unsanctioned unions are referred to as *mai kanat* *makka* and they do not enjoy membership of their father's *okka* as legitimate children do. In fact, they are not members of any *okka*. Usually, however, elders bring pressure on the lover's kindred to the grant of membership for the children in the lover's *okka*. But if this is impossible, the children are made members of their mother's natal *okka*.

If the children of an unsanctioned union and their mother are given membership in the lover's *okka* while both the woman and her lover are still alive it is called *bendu* (relative) *parijé*. If, however, the father dies before the children and their mother have been given *sammanda* in his *okka*, then the elders try to see that *sammanda* is given at least before the corpse is disposed of. Such a belated granting of membership is called *kutfa* (funeral pyre) *parijé*. This enables the widow to take part in the funeral rites.

5. A boy from outside is adopted when there are no agnatic descendants in an *okka*. *Sammanda* is performed, giving the boy question membership of the heirless *okka*.

6. Adoption is not, however, necessary if there is an unmarried girl (or even the widow of a dead member) in the *okka* without an heir. The girl is then married according to the custom of *okka parijé* by which the children of the marriage become members of their mother's natal *okka*. The man himself ceases to be a member of his natal *okka* and becomes instead a member of his wife's natal *okka*.

The institution of *makka* (children) *parijé* is resorted to when it is impossible to find a man willing to leave his natal *okka* and become a member of the heirless *okka*. *Makka parijé* is a sanctioned union between the daughter of the heirless *okka* and a man who, while remaining a member of his natal *okka* and performing his duties by it, also agrees to raise up seed for the heirless *okka*. He usually stays in his natal home and visits his *makka parijé* 'wife' only occasionally. The children of this alliance are members of their mother's *okka*. It is usual for the *makka parijé* 'husband' to have a wife married to him in the normal way and living with him in his natal home. The children of the latter union, unlike the children of

596 *makka parijé* alliance, belong to their father's *okka*. Thus the *makka*
 892 *parijé* husband remains a member of his *natal okka* with a wife
 728 living with him, and in addition to this he undertakes to raise up
 seed for another *okka* which has no male heirs, but has instead
 only an unmarried girl. He only occasionally visits his *makka parijé*
 [837] wife. *Makka parijé* has the sanction of custom behind it and it has
 to be distinguished clearly from extra-marital alliances which are
 disapproved.

586 7. Children normally and usually belong to their father's *okka*.
 768 Consequently the children of a divorcée, or a widow who wants to
 587 marry someone not belonging to her late husband's *okka*, do not
 follow their mother but continue to remain in their natal home.
 In certain exceptional circumstances, however, the children of
 a widow or divorcée are allowed to become members of their
 mother's natal *okka*. The unanimous consent of the children's
 natal *okka* as well as that of their mother's natal *okka* is required in
 order to effect the transfer. If such consent is forthcoming from
 both sides the children's rights in their natal *okka* are ritually
 severed, after which they are given *sammānda* in their mother's
 natal *okka*. The marriage of the widow or divorcée subsequent to
 the children being given *sammānda* in her natal *okka* does not
 affect their legal status. They do not follow the mother into her
 new husband's *okka*. This would again require the unanimous
 consent of the members of the mother's natal *okka* and her new
 husband's *okka*.

● 593 Rights of membership in an *okka* are an extremely important
 596 matter affecting all the members in a variety of ways, social,
 economic, legal, and ritual. Both the loss as well as the acquisition
 of a member make a profound difference in the day-to-day inter-
 relations of members. The granting of membership and the loss of
 membership both become subject to *sammānda* ritual. *Sammānda*
 dramatically brings home to the parties concerned the implications
 of granting or withdrawing membership. As *sammānda* is a public
 occasion, the parties concerned in it will not be able to go back on
 it at a future date. The ritual that surrounds the giving or with-
 drawal of *sammānda* rights brings ritual sanctions into operation.

IV

596 The most frequent form of marriage is 'the marriage of a virgin'
 593 (*kanni mangala*), in which the bride leaves her natal *okka* and
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becomes a member of the groom's *okka*. *Sammanda* ritual effects the transference of the bride to the groom's *okka* and makes clear the legal implications of marriage to everyone concerned.

The *sammanda* ritual is performed at the entrance to the kitchen of the bride's ancestral house. The bride stands inside the kitchen while the groom stands outside, with the threshold in between them. The bride's family friend and two of her kinsmen stand on one side of the groom, while the latter's family friend, and two of his kinsmen stand on the other side. The other relatives and guests watch the proceedings from a distance. The family friends utter the traditional *sammanda* formulas.

I give below a free translation of the Kodagi text, and I should like to stress the fact that there is some elasticity in the formulae uttered.

Bride's Family Friend: 'The people of both the *nāḍis*, men of the house, relatives and family friend, are they all standing in rows?'

Groom's Family Friend: 'They stand.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'To the girl Pārvati of Nuchchimané-yanda *okka* whom we are about to give in marriage to the youth Muttanna of the Malchira *okka*, will you give the girl *sammanda* (rights) in the property of the groom's *okka*? Will you give her rights in the Malchira *okka*'s land which yields a thousand *bhattis*¹ of paddy, in the ten *kandas*² of pasture, in the cattle-stand, in the ten pairs of bullocks, in the house, in the garden, in the ten milch cows, in the bamboo receptacle used for milking, in the cattle-shed where the cattle are herded, in the paddy-flat,³ in the ridges of the paddy-flat, in the manure-heap, in the land which has silted up, in the paddy-field encroached upon by neighbours, in the runaway servant, in the elephant on heat, in the axe which, swinging, they cut, in the knife which, lifting, they cut, in the paddy in the granary, in the two-seer measure used for measuring paddy, in the seer-measure used for measuring rice, in the bell metal dish leaning against the wall, in the wall-lamp, in the stock of salt, in the kitchen stove, in the buried treasure, in the stock of thread, in the piece of cloth used for extracting thread, in the piece of iron used for making

¹ The term '*dyira bhatti bhūmi*', or 'land which yields 1,000 *bhattis* of paddy' is a conventional term and only means that the groom's *okka* is rich.

² A *kanda* is a plot of land of a certain size.

³ Rice is cultivated usually in small ridged-up flats or plots. It is very necessary at various stages in its cultivation to stand water for days, if not weeks, in the flats.

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needles, in the tiny *chundekka*¹ fruit, and in brief, in everything from one to one hundred, will you give her rights (*sammāda*)?

Groom's Family Friend: 'We give.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'On the marriage of our child into your *okka* our servants will carry on their heads goods worth a thousand *birāns*² in a box worth five hundred *birāns*. If this goes, who is the family friend to be held responsible for the loss?'

Groom's Family Friend: 'I.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'Who are you?'

Groom's Family Friend: 'I belong to Chirāṇḍa *okka*, and I am the family friend of Malchira *okka*.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'Are you the family friend attached to their soil (*maṇṇaruva*), or have you been hired with gold for the occasion (*ponṇaruva*)?'

Groom's Family Friend: 'I am both the traditional family friend and the family friend hired with gold for the occasion.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'Here, take these twelve pieces of gold.'

[195] 'Pieces of gold' is only a euphemism, however: the groom's family friend is actually given pebbles. He is given only eleven pebbles, one pebble being retained as already mentioned.

Groom's Family Friend: 'I have received eleven pieces of gold. If your innocent child, the girl who is married to our boy, complains that the rice is too hot, or that the curry is too pungent, or that her father-in-law is abusive, or that her mother-in-law is niggardly, or that her husband is impotent, or that she cannot stay in her husband's house, or that her husband's people are poor, and thus complaining, she goes back to her natal *okka* and sits there, who is the person to be held responsible for telling her what is right and repairing the wrong, and for providing us (who have gone to fetch her), for our return journey, with servants for company and torches to light our way?'

Bride's Family Friend: 'I.'

Groom's Family Friend: 'Who are you?'

Bride's Family Friend: 'I belong to Appachettolāṇḍa *okka*, and I am the family friend of Nuchchimaneyāṇḍa *okka*.'

[245] ¹ *Chundekka* is a tiny fruit growing on a bushy plant used for hedging. It is a vegetable, and in the above context it means a thing of small value, or a contemptible thing.

² *Birān* is a corruption of *varaha*, an ancient Indian coin worth about Rs 3-8-0.

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Groom's Family Friend: 'Are you the traditional family friend, ⁵⁹⁶
or have you been hired with gold for the present occasion?' ⁵⁹³

Bride's Family Friend: 'Both.' ⁵⁸⁵

Groom's Family Friend: 'Here, take witness-money.' He pays a *pana* to the bride's family friend.

Bride's Family Friend: 'If our young girl comes upon some misfortune, who is the family friend to be held responsible for sending her to her natal *okka* with servants for company and torches for the road?'

Groom's Family Friend: 'I.'

Bride's Family Friend: 'Here, take witness-money.'

He pays a *pana* to the groom's family friend.

The ritual of *sammanda* is now over.

V

The transfer of pebbles is an essential part of *sammanda*. According to an old saying, 'the weight of a person in gold is twelve pieces' (*ponnu tuka manushya pannarandachchi*). The totality of rights which a person has in the *okka* of which he is a member is represented by twelve pebbles referred to as 'pieces of gold'. At marriage the bride's family friend gives eleven pebbles to the groom's family friend as most of the rights which the bride had in her natal *okka* have been given up and acquired in the groom's *okka* instead. One pebble is retained because the bride's connexion with her natal *okka* is too deep and fundamental to be totally destroyed. In fact, if the bride happens to be divorced later, she has a right to return to her natal home. As the old saying has it, 'when a girl falls upon evil days, she goes back to her natal home'.

Some Coorgs have taken the theory of the estimation of the value of the rights of a person in his (or her) *okka* rather literally. They argue that each 'piece of gold' represents the traditional estimate of the price of a part of the ancestral property and at the marriage of a virgin the bride's relatives buy up her rights in her natal *okka* and pay her the price. The bride buys herself membership of the groom's *okka* with the money she has acquired.

Pieces of gold do not seem to have been used in the past instead of pebbles. The use of pebbles is clearly symbolic and it enables the persons concerned to understand the legal implications of marriage.

593 The groom's family friend who receives the eleven pebbles
 596 hands them over to the matron of honour who ties them up in a
 585 bundle. She ties the bundle to the frontal breast-knot (*molékaſ*) of
 the bride. Just before the bride leaves for the groom's house this
 bundle is put into the box containing the bride's trousseau.

593 Nowadays it is not usual for the pebbles to be kept for any length
 596 of time. Neither do Coorgs regard these pebbles as sacred. But
 586 elderly informants consider that the pebbles *ought* to be kept in the
 768 groom's house and returned in the event of divorce or widow-
 hood.

When a woman is returning to her natal *okka* on being divorced,
 or when a widow is returning to her natal *okka* preparatory to
 marrying someone who is not a member of her late husband's
okka, the divorcée's or widow's connexion with her conjugal *okka*
 is ritually severed. This is referred to as 'giving up the pebbles'
 (*kallumbara kaipa*).¹ The bride's family friend and groom's family
 friend break the connexion in set formulas which are the same as
 those used in marriage but for certain necessary alterations.

In the *sammanda* ritual performed at the 'marriage of a virgin',
 the emphasis is on the fact of the bride obtaining rights in the
 groom's *okka*, and not on her losing her rights in her natal *okka*.
 When a widow or divorcée is returning to her natal *okka*, the
sammanda ritual that is performed severs her connexion with her
 conjugal *okka*. In both cases, however, the loss of membership of
 an *okka* is accompanied by gaining membership of another. The
 difference in emphasis however leads to the one being described as
 the 'conferring of *sammanda*' and the other as the 'giving up of
 pebbles'.

Children normally belong to their father's *okka*, and they remain
 in their natal home even when their mother leaves her conjugal
 house on widowhood or divorce. Very young children, however,
 accompany their mother to her natal or new home, but they return
 to their father's house on attaining their third or fourth year.

When a divorcée (or widow who is remarrying into a different
okka from her late husband's) is given permission to visit her
 children in their father's house, the eleven pebbles are not returned
 by the first husband's family friend to the family friend of her

¹ The same ceremony is also referred to as 'kal mara kaipa', i.e. 'giving up
 stone and tree'. Stone and tree are said to stand for the estate of the *okka* in
 question. See N. Chinnappa, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

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natal *okka*. Her connexion with her conjugal house is, however, ritually severed with the usual formulas. 593
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In some rare cases the children of a widow or divorcée are given rights in their mother's natal *okka*. In such a case the rights which the children have in their father's *okka* are ritually given up before they are acquired in their mother's natal *okka*. The pebbles are transferred from the family friend of the children's father's *okka* to the family friend of their mother's natal *okka*. The adopted son similarly loses his membership of his natal *okka* and acquires membership of the adoptive *okka*. The *okka parié* husband also transfers himself from his natal *okka* to his conjugal *okka*. Pebbles are transferred in both the above instances. 586
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The conferment as well as withdrawal of membership has important results on the relations of the various members towards each other. The ritual brings home to those present the meaning of what is taking place. Publicity is ensured by the presence of a few local and caste elders in addition to the representatives of the *okkas* concerned. Such publicity gives the event a certain finality. Lastly, as the ritual takes place in a very sacred part of the ancestral house, before the domestic deities and ancestors, solemnity is added to the occasion which is also invested with ritual sanctions.

VI

Sammanda constitutes the legal part of marriage: for instance, the bride will become a widow if the groom dies after *sammanda*, whereas his death before *sammanda* would not have such an effect on her. 587
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It is usual for a Coorg widow to remarry. If, however, she is past middle age and has grown-up children, she does not remarry, but continues to stay in her late husband's house looking after her children.

A widow who wishes to remarry might marry either a brother, real or classificatory, of the late husband, or a total stranger. As mentioned earlier, there is a preference for leviratic unions among Coorgs, and where it is possible, a widow marries someone who is not only related as brother to her late husband, but also belongs to the same *okka* as him. In the latter event, no new *sammanda* is necessary.

The ritual conferment of membership has been described earlier,

587 and consequently only the ritual withdrawal of membership will
 596 be described here. Set formulas very similar to those used for
 593 conferment of membership are used at the withdrawal.

The ritual is performed in the central hall of the late (or divorced) husband's house. Two kinsmen of the widow (or divorcée) and the family friend of her natal *okka* stand in a row facing two kinsmen of the dead (or divorced) husband, and the family friend of his *okka*. The articles which the widow (or divorcée) brought with her to her conjugal house are kept in the central hall in the boxes in which they were brought at the wedding. The presence of the widow or divorcée herself is not deemed necessary.

The widow's family friend opens the proceedings by asking the late husband's family friend whether all the concerned men are present, and the late husband's family friend replies in the affirmative.

Widow's Family Friend: 'Muthamma of such-and-such an *okka* married Ponnappa of such-and-such an *okka*. Ponnappa was short-lived. Owing to Muthamma's evil destiny, she was not permitted the good fortune of living together with her husband for a long time. We will now take back your girl Muthamma according to the adage, "when a girl comes upon evil days, she goes back to her natal *okka*".'

Late Husband's Family Friend: 'Yes, that is according to old usage.'

Widow's Family Friend: 'When Muthamma married Ponnappa, her servants carried on their heads goods worth a thousand *birāns* in boxes worth five hundred *birāns*. Whatever goods now remain, after having been eaten and worn, may I take them back?'

Late Husband's Family Friend: 'Yes, that is according to old usage.'

Widow's Family Friend: 'Here, take witness-money.'

Late Husband's Family Friend: 'I have received it. When Muthamma married Ponnappa she was given membership of Ponnappa's *okka*. She lost membership of her natal *okka* and you gave us eleven pieces of gold on that occasion which we now return.'

He returns eleven pebbles to the widow's family friend.

Widow's Family Friend: 'I have received them.'

Late Husband's Family Friend: 'Here, take witness-money.'

Widow's Family Friend: 'I have received it.'

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The goods which the bride, now widowed, brought into her conjugal house are then removed to the veranda. The widow's family friend selects two or three pieces of cloth from the widow's possessions and puts them into a box. He carries the box into the central hall and says, 'Since our girl ate here we should like to leave this box here'. The elders of the late husband's *okka* are theoretically free to accept or reject this gift. But in practice a definite sentiment seems to exist against its acceptance.¹

VII

Coorg marriages are very stable, and divorce is not at all common. In fact, an exceptionally able and well-informed elder could not recall more than seven cases of divorce in the last fifty years. The most frequent ground for divorce seems to be adultery on the wife's part. Incompatibility between the husband and wife, impotence of the husband, cruelty, and lack of thrift on the wife's part are also grounds for divorce, though these seem to have been very rare. A wife was expected to obey the husband in most matters, and she worked under the supervision of the mistress of the house in matters of domestic economy, and consequently incompatibility and lack of thrift became significant only in rare cases.

Where a Coorg woman committed adultery with a member of an Untouchable caste she was summarily thrown out of caste. Adultery with a Coorg man was not as serious a matter, but still far from trivial. In the latter case, her husband was certain to turn her out of his house and her natal *okka* would be not at all friendly to her. If, however, her parents were alive, they would offer her shelter even though they strongly disapproved of what she had done.

The attitude of the public towards a divorcée is different from that towards a widow. Widowhood is a misfortune, decreed by God or the result of *karma*, whereas divorce reveals a serious flaw in the divorcée's character. This is natural enough if the woman has been divorced for adultery, or lack of thrift, or incompatibility. It is a woman's duty to adjust herself to her husband and his *okka*,

¹ Shri K. J. Chengappa tells me that where the widow has children by her first marriage and it is decided to allow these children to remain in their late father's *okka*, all the widow's goods are not removed to her natal *okka*. A good part is left in the late husband's *okka* because of the children. She takes to her second husband's house only a small part of her original trousseau.

587 and failure to do so renders her suspect. It is fairly easy for a widow
589 to secure a husband, while there is great reluctance to marrying
a divorcée. Again, a widow is permitted to marry after a minimum
period of six months have elapsed after the death of her husband,
while a divorcée may remarry only after a year has elapsed since
the granting of divorce. A widow is entitled to visit her children
in their father's house, whereas a divorcée is not entitled to do so.
Finally, a widow who has returned to her natal *okka* may marry
again into her late husband's *okka*, whereas the doors of the former
husband's *okka* are for ever shut to the divorcée.¹

[581] But the divorcée and widow are alike in this, that neither has
a husband, and a woman, normally speaking, should not be with-
out a husband. An unattached woman is a threat to the stability of
existing social relations and to the moral code of the community.
The widow and divorcée are both regarded with a certain amount
of suspicion.

VIII

593 The children of an ordinary marriage are members of their
594 father's *okka*. The fact of birth confers this all-important right on
858 them and no special ceremony conferring membership is necessary.
In *okka parié* and *makka parié* unions, however, the children
belong to the natal *okka* of their mother, and this is only natural as
the object of such alliances is the continuation of the mother's
natal *okka*, threatened with extinction for lack of an agnatic male
descendant.

The important fact is that the children of a sanctioned union are
members of an *okka*, either their father's or mother's, and such
membership they acquire by reason of birth. But the children of
an unsanctioned union do not have membership in any *okka*, and
they have to be given membership in either their father's or
mother's *okka* some time subsequent to their birth.

586 In those rare cases where the existence of very special reasons lead
768 to the children of a widow or divorcée being permitted to be trans-
ferred to their mother's *okka* from their father's *okka*, the unani-
mous consent of the members of both the concerned *okkas* is
regarded as essential. After the widow or divorcée has been ritually

[533] ¹ A Coorg saw says that one may marry a widow but not a divorcée: *heffa*
poṇṇana bāvalu, buffa poṇṇana bāvakāga.

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groom's *okka* to collect. The water in the well is worshipped before taking a vesselful into the kitchen. (It was seen earlier that the confined woman similarly worshipped the well before resuming her contact with it after an absence of several months.) 585

At night, on the same day, the bride is given a new name by the women members of the groom's *okka*. This may be the name of a dead woman of the groom's *okka*. Even when the bride is not given a totally new name, some change is effected in her old name.¹ If the bride is divorced later, or if she becomes a widow and wishes to return to her natal house, at the ceremony in which her connexion with her conjugal *okka* is severed, the family friend of her natal *okka* refers to her by the name given to her in her natal house, while the family friend of the groom's *okka* refers to her by the name given to her at marriage. Thus the giving of a new name marks a change in the bride's social personality: she loses her membership of her natal *okka* and becomes a member of the groom's *okka*. [553]

Soon after the bride has carried water from the domestic well into the kitchen, the groom's mother gives her a cup of milk to drink, or a dish of rice and milk sweetened with sugar. In some parts of Coorg she also combs the daughter-in-law's hair on this occasion.

In the patrilocal *okka* the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is very intimate and important. One might say that in the first few years of marriage it is even more important than the husband-wife relationship. The fact of social segregation of the sexes operates against the young husband and wife spending any considerable time together before bedtime. Again, it is not thought proper for the young husband and wife to spend too much time in each other's company. Such a couple will be 'talked about'. A young man must attend to his work, must not encourage his wife to be indifferent to her share of domestic work, and must be respectful to his elders. All this means that he does not get a real chance to be with her till he retires to bed at night. 593 • 606

The daughter-in-law must try and please her parents-in-law: this is one of the main aims of her life. She must do her share of the 606

¹ *Akkamma* might be changed, for instance, into *Akkavva*. 'Amma' indicates girlhood while 'Avva' indicates womanhood. Some westernized Coorgs do not change names at marriage. The names of dead relatives are not very popular nowadays as they are considered old fashioned. [177]

428 instance of the silent and effective transformation of an original
178 Coorg custom into a similar, though not identical, Sanskrit custom.

A girl ought to get married and become a mother, and a mother
501 is honoured among Coorgs. The bond between a mother and child
● 593 is the most intimate of bonds and this fact expresses itself in ritual.

846 While other relatives, including the infant's father, become free
from birth-pollution on the twelfth day, the mother becomes free
from pollution only on the sixtieth day. The stronger the bond
prevalent the longer is the period of pollution, and this is so in birth
as well as death.

766 When an infant whose milk teeth have not appeared dies, it is
593 buried without ceremony, and a half of a coconut shell containing
milk from the mother's breast is kept over the grave. Only the
mother is required to take a bath and change into pure clothes.

The special importance of the maternal bond is recognized at
593 marriage also: the mother is the first person to perform *mūrta* to
- 585 the bride or groom, provided she is not a widow. The mother has
to give her money-gift enclosed in a purse, and this is tied to the
frontal breast-knot of the bride's *sari*.

It is not only in ritual that the strength of the mother-child bond
593 is acknowledged: a number of proverbs testify to its strength. One
558 compares the motherless child to a crop in drought. Another tells
us that the father becomes a firebrand after the mother is dead. In
proverbs the mother is the tender figure and she contrasts with the
father who is comparatively lacking in affection and fickle. He can
be trusted only as long as the mother is alive, and once the mother
dies, his affection for his children decreases. He is likely to take up
another wife who will be the focus of his interest and attention.

593 The dependence of children on their mother later gives way to
606 great regard and respect for her, and this fact complicates the
husband-wife relationship. A man does not like his wife's criticizing
his mother, and even if he discovers that his mother does not
treat his wife properly he would be loath to intervene.

591 The bond prevalent between a mother and her daughter is
593 always a very deep one, and has a great poignancy because the
daughter, on marriage, has to leave her natal home for her con-
jugal home. The mother is aware that her sons have all the rights,
privileges, and power in the ancestral house, whereas her daughters
have to leave their natal home and spend their lives among people
who will, to say the least, be critical of her in the first few years.

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The daughter looks upon her natal home as a haven of refuge in the first few years of married life. Her first confinement takes place in her natal home because it is considered proper for the girl to be with people with whom she can be at ease. 591

A proverb tells us that 'the mother's love for her daughter rendered her unfit to live with her husband, the sitting hen's love destroyed the egg'. An overfond mother tries to drag her married daughter away from her husband, and this might eventually break up the marriage. 593

The elementary family, which is a part of the *okka* or joint family, is weakly structured among Coorgs. This is because the *okka* is so strong that it does not permit the elementary families inside it to be strong units. There is no separate term for the elementary family. 594

The solidarity of the elementary family does not obtain expression in ritual. It is true that the affinal tie is very strongly emphasized in mourning, and the eldest son is a mourner of the first grade, and sometimes a younger son or daughter is also called upon to become a first-grade mourner. But usually the younger children of the dead person are not distinguished from the other younger members of the *okka*.

The fact that the elementary family is weakly structured among Coorgs does not mean that it has no solidarity; and in the last 120 years its solidarity has been increasing at the expense of the solidarity of the *okka* of which it is a part. Coorg ancestral houses are large, sprawling affairs, and the members of each elementary family within an *okka* occupy either a room, or a couple of rooms, or an entire wing. Sometimes they occupy one of two or three houses belonging to the *okka*. A member of the M-*okka* once told me, 'When this house was built over seventy years ago there were only two or three people in it. But our ancestors were so wise that they built a large house with a number of rooms so that all their descendants could live in it.' Now each of the married brothers and his children occupy a room or a couple of rooms inside it. 178

The unity of the elementary families within the *okka* appears in certain non-ritual contexts. For instance, parents take sides with their own children against the children of another member of the *okka* in the frequent quarrels of children. A proverb tells us that 'the *okka* went to ruin over the children's talk'. Quarrels arise when 'the children of the *okka* play together, and these children's quarrels 594 596

594 lead to the elders having an argument, an argument which might
 596 later split the *okka*. Another proverb tells us that 'children's play
 [53] leads to the *okka*'s ruin'.

Marriage is very nearly universal among Coorgs, and bachelors
 589 and spinsters are very rare indeed. A man's social personality is
 fully developed only when he has married and become a father, and
 consequently a bachelor is regarded as one who is not fully
 developed.

It is believed that a bachelor dies with many unsatisfied desires
 [76] in his heart. While a gold coin is placed in the mouth of the corpse
 of a married man, a bitter fruit is kept in the mouth of a bachelor's
 [725] corpse. A bachelor's ghost is regarded as mischievous, and the
 ghost of a bachelor-warrior as even more mischievous.

[769] During the periodical ancestor-propitiations in a Coorg *okka*,
 songs are sung recounting the deeds of each ancestor. The name
 of a bachelor-ancestor is omitted from such a song unless he had
 proved an exceptional success in life, or had died while fighting in
 battle. Such exceptional qualifications are not, however, required
 from a married ancestor. A bachelor's personality is normally
 incomplete, and only the achievement of exceptional social impor-
 tance can outweigh this fact.

581 Sanskritic Hinduism prescribes marriage for every adult. And
 583 only a married man may perform certain important rites.¹ A man
 and his wife constitute a single spiritual entity, and a wife shares
 in the spiritual merit acquired by her husband. Sanskritic Hindu-
 ism also enjoins on the wife the duty of effacing herself completely
 for her husband.

593 The strength of the husband-wife bond and the subservience of
 783 the wife to the husband express themselves in ritual. When a Coorg
 couple bathe in the source of the river Kāvēri during the Kāvēri
 Festival, the ends of their garments are tied together: Hindus in
 every part of India observe this custom when they are bathing in
 a sacred river or tank.

593 Until recent years a Coorg bride and groom never sat together
 585 for the performance of *mūrta*. *Mūrta* was performed separately for
 the groom and bride in their respective houses on the first day of

¹ A Brahmin friend of mine married soon after the lapse of the required period
 of a year after the death of his father because the performance of certain rites like
 the periodical offerings to dead ancestors and the worship of the deities tradi-
 tionally worshipped by his family required him to be married. He was the eldest
 son of his father.

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marriage. On the second day the groom's relatives performed *mūrta* to the bride, and the bride's relatives to the groom; and finally the groom performed *mūrta* to the bride. The groom and bride sat in different parts of the bride's house while *mūrta* was performed for each, and when this ended the groom walked over to the bride sitting in the kitchen. 593
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Nowadays, however, on the second day, the bride and groom are made to sit together in the central hall of the bride's house while *mūrta* is performed for each. Some Coorgs call this 'double *mūrta*'—the English word 'double' is used by them. I learn that this modification of the original Coorg custom was introduced over thirty years ago by a Coorg who occupied a high position in the government of a neighbouring province. This modification is clearly an attempt to Sanskritize a Coorg custom. [176]

A Coorg woman whose husband is alive enjoys a higher ritual and social status than a widow. This is so among high-caste Hindus all over India, and the Coorg phenomenon may be regarded as an attenuated instance of the Sanskritic phenomenon. A Coorg woman whose husband is alive wears a necklace of black glass beads and black glass bangles, and these ornaments have become the auspicious symbols of the married state for a woman. No widow may wear them. 589
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There is need to distinguish between a woman whose first and only husband is alive and another who after being widowed has remarried. The latter's ritual status is inferior to the former's, but it is higher than that of a widow who has not remarried.

A widow who decides not to remarry wears a uniform of a white *sari*, a white blouse, and a white scarf. None of these garments may have a coloured border. [292]

In Sanskritic Hinduism a wife is expected to regard her husband as her deity. Widowhood is the result of evil actions performed in a previous incarnation. A widow is denied the ritual and social privileges of a married woman. She is not permitted to remarry. She is regarded as an inauspicious person. 593
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Sanskritic Hinduism emphasizes the affinal tie in a variety of ways, but chiefly ritual. Ritual ideas tend to be all-pervasive. The worship of symbols of the married state by women, the ritual and social inferiority of the widow to the *sumangali*, coupled with the ban on widow remarriage, and the linking of widowhood to the idea of *karma*, all contribute to the strengthening of the marital

593 bond. It is obvious that among Coorgs, Sanskritic Hinduism has
 589 had such a strengthening effect and has contributed to sub-
 ordinating the wife to her husband.

XIV

596 At any given moment of time the *okka* is made up of a group of
 agnatically related males descended from a common ancestor, and
 their wives and children. When the older members of the *okka* die
 the younger members take their places. The dynamic element in
 the *okka* consists in the younger members succeeding to the
 positions left vacant by the death of the older members. The *okka*
 may be looked upon as a certain configuration of persons bound
 together by agnatic and affinal ties, and this configuration remains
 more or less constant over a period of time. The generation-depth
 of an *okka* might expand by a birth, or contract by a death, a seg-
 ment may cling on or split off, but in the main there is a certain
 constancy of configuration which makes it an *okka*. The members
 of an *okka* come and go, but the *okka* goes on for ever. They are
 like people on an escalator, those on the bottom stairs moving
 gradually up to the top and finally disappearing.

An *okka* not only looks forward to the future but also stretches
 back into the past. Each *okka* has a distinct tradition with which its
 living members are acquainted. The 'house song' (*mané pāṣ*) sung
 at the harvest festival and ancestor-propitiation enables the younger
 members to learn the 'history' of the *okka*.

596 The dead ancestor of a Coorg *okka* is called *kāraṇava*. *Kāraṇa*
 769 in Sanskrit means, among other things, 'the cause, instrument,
 origin, principle, the cause of being, a father'.¹ All the ancestors are
 not of the same rank: the founder of the *okka* has a higher status
 than the others. He is called *mūla puruṣa* (original man) or *ādi*
guru (first preceptor), or *ādi kāraṇava* (first ancestor), and his
 higher status is reflected in the fact that at the periodical ancestor-
 propitiations a pig must be sacrificed to him, while to the other
 ancestors a fowl will do.² Also the Baṇṇa oracle dons the upper
 part of his *téré* equipment in the Founder's honour. For the others

[782] ¹ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 274.

² Pigs are also usually sacrificed to bachelor-ancestors who died a violent
 death, and to elderly males who died subsequent to the performance of the
 previous ancestor-propitiation. But elderly women who died after the per-
 formance of the previous ancestor-propitiation are offered only fowl.

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The marriage is at present arranged by the families of the young people. The family of the young man approaches the family of a girl who is considered a suitable match and after much discussion arrangements are made; the girl is informed of them and in most cases she acquiesces. The authority of the family is ideally supreme. Young people have many opportunities of meeting, or at least of seeing one another, and as we should expect, matches that are not likely to be enduring are tacitly avoided by the elders of the family. Cases are known however where a girl has refused the arranged marriage and for various reasons elder members of her family have agreed with her and prevented the marriage; cases are also known where a young man after suggesting for himself a particular girl and carrying with him most of the other members of his family has found opposition from an elderly female member who disapproves of the girl and he has had to give up his idea. Life in a joint family, as is well known in other parts of India, is a matter of the adjustment of conflicting stresses. The evidence of the marriage song seems to show that at some time in the past a young man went out himself to look for a suitable girl and settled the matter himself, without reference to his family until the time for the formal arrangement arrived. There is probably some historical truth in the account, but the period at which this was the custom is not known. Richter's account of 1870 implies, though it does not mention explicitly, a state of things like that at the present day.

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When a marriage is to be formally arranged and fixed, the aruvé¹ of the young man's family accompanied by representatives of this family, e.g. the man's father, his elder brother, or a brother-in-law, go to the house of the girl's family. There they meet the aruvé and the representatives of the girl's family. Formally the man's party declare that he will marry the girl and the girl's party that they will give the girl, and the aruvés guarantee that their respective parties will hold to the agreement. The ceremony is performed in the nellaki of the house, i.e. the portion of the central hall opposite the door, where a lamp hangs. It is regarded as the sacred part of the house and apparently the sanctity centers in the lamp, before which prayers are offered in the evening to the ancestors of the sib (or nowadays to any other gods in addition). Most of the ceremonies to be described

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¹ Two sibs stand in mutual relationship to one another, so that each provides an aruvé for the other on certain ceremonial occasions. Their duties in connexion with marriages are described in the text. At a funeral the aruvé is present and seems to have been originally entrusted with supervision of the ceremonial. At present the office tends to become a mere formality and the aruvé does not necessarily come from the traditional sib. The man of the traditional sib is called mapparuvé 'land-aruvé'; one who is engaged for the occasion only is ponnaruvé 'gold-aruvé' and this term seems to carry with it some derogatory connotation.

PERSONAL NAMES OF THE TODAS¹

By M. B. EMENEAU

IN societies organized in sibs, the sib unit sometimes has a name which is borne by all its members. Personal names often have no relation to the sib unit, but either are drawn from a common stock which may be utilized indiscriminately by all the sibs, or are invented according to patterns which are distinct from the pattern of sib-division. The latter type is seen in the system employed by the Plains Indians of North America. The former resembles the family naming system employed normally in European or European-derived cultures, where it is not combined with a sib-division except in such groups as the Scottish clans.

§1. An example of sib-division combined with utilization of a common stock of personal names is seen in the Coorgs of South India. Among these people the patrilineal sibs have each a name which is borne by every member of the sib. Personal names are drawn from a rather small stock, consisting of some sixty names for men and a slightly smaller number for women. A male or an unmarried female is identified by the sib-name, the father's personal name, and the individual's personal name, in this order. A married female bears her husband's sib-name, his personal name, and her own personal name. There seems to be no tendency for personal names to be linked with particular sibs. A slight tendency is found to preserve the use of particular personal names within the family (as distinguished from the sib) by giving to a child the name of some dead ancestor within the family whose memory it is desired to perpetuate. It is doubtful, however, whether this tendency has even as much force as the similar tendency in European or American society; a notable difference between the two is that the Coorgs do not give such names during the lifetime of the earlier bearer of the name, since this would cause a certain amount of confusion within the family.

§2. Among the Todas, a pastoral tribe of the Nilgiris in South India, the method of giving names is different from both those outlined above. The individual does not bear a name which is common to all members of his

¹ This paper represents a small part of the work which I have done on the non-literary languages of South India, under the auspices and with the financial aid of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1935-36 and of the American Philosophical Society (Penrose Fund) in 1936-37. I have to acknowledge my gratitude to Dr David Mandelbaum, who read over the paper and made numerous helpful suggestions. The system of phonemic writing for Toda words is the same as that employed in my paper, *Toda Marriage Regulations and Taboos* (American Anthropologist, Vol. 39, pp. 103-12, 1937); in that paper, f, g, x should be read for v, s, y in Toda words throughout. Accent is always on the initial syllable.

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